

Message Text

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ACTION OES-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 ABF-01 AGRE-00 CIAE-00 COME-00

DODE-00 DOTE-00 EB-08 EPA-04 FSE-00 HEW-06 HUD-02

INR-07 INT-05 LOC-01 NASA-02 NSAE-00 NSF-02 OMB-01

USIA-15 SMI-01 TRSE-00 SSO-00 INRE-00 /074 W

-----020850 108233 /21

O 011555Z MAR 77

FM AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9729

UNCLAS BELGRADE 1233

EO 11652: NA

TAGS: OSCI TGEN YO

SUBJ: SFCP: US-YUGOSLAV JOINT BOARD MEETING

REF: STATE 38182

1. AT 1455 MARCH 1 SUTLOVIC OF FAISECTC TELEPHONED TO SAY THAT HE AND PIRKMAJER HAVE DECIDED TO POSTPONE THE JOINT BOARD MEETING MAR 7-11. SUTLOVIC SAID THAT THE U.S. PROPOSAL (REFTEL, PARAS 3 AND 4) SUBMITTED TO FAISECTC AS A BASIS FOR DISCUSSION SHOULD BE REVIEWED BY THE YUGOSLAV INSTITUTES "IN ORDER TO HAVE A GOOD MEETING." HE HOPED TO BE READY TO HOLD THE JOINT BOARD MEETING SOMETIME IN APRIL.

2. SCIATT POINTED OUT IN STRONG TERMS THAT THIS UNILATERAL DECISION WOULD GREATLY INCONVENIENCE NOT ONLY HIM BUT ALL OF THOSE USG OFFICIALS WHO HAD PREPARED FOR THE MEETINGS SIX DAYS HENCE. HE STRESSED THAT THE U.S. PROPOSAL WAS SUBMITTED ONLY AS A BASIS OF DISCUSSION AND NOT FOR A DEFINITE DECISION AT THE JOINT BOARD MEETING AND THAT MANY OF THE SPECIFIC SPENDING PROPOSALS COULD BE WORKED OUT TELEGRAPHICALLY FOLLOWING THE MAR 7-11 MEETING. HE SAID THAT THE POSTPONEMENT NOT ONLY MEANT EXTRA WORK FOR VERY BUSY OFFICIALS IN THE DEPARTMENT, BUT ALSO WOULD REQUIRE A CONSIDERABLE PERIOD OF TIME BEFORE A WEEK COULD BE

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FOUND WHEN THE CONCERNED OFFICIALS IN THE DEPARTMENT AND OTHER AGENCIES WOULD BE AVAILABLE -- PERHAPS NOT BEFORE MAY. SUTLOVIC COUNTERED THAT THE USE OF THE JOINT FUND INTEREST EARNINGS WAS THE ONLY IMPORTANT ITEM ON THE AGENDA AND THE YUGOSLAV SIDE HAD TO BE WELL PREPARED.

3. COMMENT: FAISECTC HAS LEFT THE DEPARTMENT NO CHOICE

BUT TO POSTPONE THE JOINT BOARD MEETING. IN THE CHOICE OF A NEW DATE THE EMBASSY WOULD NOT BE AVERSE TO LATER RATHER THAN SOONER, PERHAPS AS LATE AS NEXT FALL. WE FIND THE LAST-MINUTE POSTPONEMENT RATHER CALLOUS AND SUTLOVIC'S REASONING UNPERSUASIVE. WHATEVER THE REAL REASON BEHIND THE DECISION, IT IS CLEAR THAT THE INITIATIVE IS COMING FROM SUTLOVIC OR HIS SUPERIORS IN FAISECTC. ON FEB 28 HE WARNED SCIATT THAT A POSTPONEMENT WAS UNDER CONSIDERATION PENDING DISCUSSION WITH PIRKMAJER THE FOLLOWING DAY. HE ADDED ALSO THAT THE YUGOSLAV EMBASSY WAS INFORMED FEB 28.

4. COMMENT CONTINUED: WE NOTE IN ALL THIS CONVINCING SUPPORT FOR EMBASSY BELIEF THAT JOINT BOARD MEETING BE HELD ONLY ONCE A YEAR. INDEED BY THE EARLIEST TIME THIS JOINT BOARD MEETING WILL HAVE TAKEN PLACE ALMOST A YEAR WILL HAVE ELAPSED SINCE THE PREVIOUS MEETING. YORK

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